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Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-33 (Cancelled).

34. (Original) A method for identifying an inhibitor of heart valve degeneration, said method comprising:

- a) contacting heart valve cells with a stimulant such that said cells proliferate,
- b) contacting said cells with a test compound, and
- c) determining if said test compound reduced the proliferation of said cells, wherein the reduction of proliferation indicates that said test compound is an inhibitor of heart valve degeneration.

35. (Original) A method for determining the safety of a drug, said method comprising:

- a) contacting heart valve cells with said drug, and
- b) determining if said drug induced proliferation of said cells, wherein the induction of proliferation indicates that said drug promotes heart valve degeneration.